

ABSTRACT

AN IMPROVED SELF-CHECKOUT TERMINAL

The invention provides a self-checkout lane for goods transactions in a retail outlet, the self-checkout lane comprising a processor, an incoming goods path for receiving goods; first and second goods collection zones in communication with the incoming goods path; and a segregation device operable under the control of the processor to divert goods from the incoming goods path into one of the goods collection zones; wherein the incoming goods path includes a product scanner electrically coupled to the processor and operable to evaluate the total retail price of a plurality of goods; each segregated goods collection zone being at least partially bounded by a barrier device operable under the control of the processor to selectively prevent a customer from accessing the goods contained therein; and wherein the processor is configured: (a) to operate the barrier device to prevent a first customer from accessing their goods from a goods collection zone until they have been paid for; and, once the first customer has paid for their goods, (b) to operate the barrier device to enable the first customer to access their goods, and (c) to operate the segregation device such that the first customer may remove their goods from their goods collection zone whilst a second customer introduces their goods to the incoming goods path. The invention facilitates the swift and efficient use of self-checkout terminals by customers, and also provides a method of retailing using a self-checkout lane, and a method by which store personnel may detect misappropriation of goods in a self-checkout facility.